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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CHISINAU 000787

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STATE FOR EUR/UMB

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [KWMN](#) [MD](#)  
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT VORONIN WANTS 5-PLUS-2  
PROGRESS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Rudolf V. Perina for reasons 1.4(b)  
and (d)

¶1. (C) In a July 21 bilateral meeting with DAS Merkel before the start of 3-plus-2, President Voronin pressed for getting the negotiators to consider the Moldovan package proposal on Transnistria's status. Voronin believes that Russian President Medvedev personally wants to solve the Transnistria problem, but does not trust the Russian approach of trying to divert away from 5-plus-2. Voronin said he would not sign any agreement outside of the international 5-plus-2 process, and acknowledged that any settlement could only succeed with international support. On bilateral issues, Voronin noted he would chair a very tough meeting on TIP in which he would ensure involvement of more government agencies in fighting trafficking. He also said that he was unable to play a more active role in GUAM because he needed Russian support on Transnistria. End Summary.

5-plus-2 Needs a Document on the Table  
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¶2. (C) Voronin said that he was tired of foot-dragging in 5-plus-2 and felt that the time had come for formal talks on the package proposal to resolve Transnistria's status. As a majority of the 5-plus-2 partners -- the U.S., EU, Ukraine, OSCE and Moldova -- all supported resuming talks, Voronin suggested that this group could take the lead in pushing for a formal 5-plus-2 meeting.

¶3. (C) President Voronin thanked the USG for giving its written comments on the Moldovan package proposal. Though Moldova had provided these documents to all 5-plus-2 partners except Transnistria, Voronin said that no other member had responded in writing. President Voronin said he would like to receive a written response from the EU, OSCE and Ukraine. However, the president lamented that he did not even know what Moscow is thinking about the package. The President's advisor said that the EU had provided Moldova with verbal comments. DAS Merkel said he planned to visit Moscow, where he would try to get a better understanding of the Russian position and encourage movement.

¶4. (C) DAS Merkel said he believed that the other partners supported the approach outlined in the package, and he hoped to clarify their positions during the current round of talks. Merkel continued by underlining that for 5-plus-2 talks to be successful there must be a document on the table. DAS Merkel said he believed it necessary to sharpen the focus of what is expected from 5-plus-2.

¶5. (C) Voronin said that he wanted a future 5-plus-2 meeting to be long-format, with all sides remaining at the table until the issues were resolved. DAS Merkel said that, while the USG might be ready to make that investment if chances of success existed, if it were not successful the Russians could use the failure to kill the entire process. Charge noted that from his experience with the Dayton accords, before moving to long-format, it was necessary for the situation to be at the point where you are reasonably sure the issues can be resolved.

Voronin Believes Medvedev wants a Settlement

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¶16. (C) Voronin said that he believes that Medvedev personally wants to solve the problem, perhaps as a way to create his own legacy. Voronin gained this impression from his talks with Medvedev in St Petersburg in early June at the economic forum. He said that Medvedev had been surprised by the degree of autonomy Moldova was proposing to grant Transnistria, including powers that none of the autonomous republics within Russia possessed. Medvedev had been surprised by inclusion of the right of parliamentary initiative and the granting of the right of secession for Transnistria should Moldova renounce its sovereignty.

¶17. (C) DAS Merkel said he believed that Russia is a "status quo player," i.e. that it benefits from having a process, but does not see its interests advanced through a final resolution. DAS Merkel suggested the need to redefine a contribution as not simply being engaged in the process, but rather, to be constructive Russia should support tabling the document and supporting formal 5-plus-2 negotiations to begin.

¶18. (C) Voronin said he would have a meeting with Medvedev within the next month, perhaps August 18 or 20. (Note: Voronin has vacation planned for August 1-17.) He said that the meeting had already been postponed several times. Voronin said that he does not like the Russian suggestion that he meet with Smirnov in the presence of Medvedev, and would rather meet first bilaterally with just Medvedev. Voronin said he fears an unexpected surprise, where suddenly a door opens, a video camera appears, and a document is thrust upon him to sign. Voronin said he had called Russian Deputy Secretary of the Security Council Zubakov and told him that he would not sign anything outside of the 5-plus-2 context.

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¶19. (C) Merkel said that he intended to visit Moscow, hopefully to talk with Zubakov and Karasin and encourage their support of tabling the package and starting 5-plus-2 negotiations. Merkel noted that the USG is not focused on who gets the credit for a settlement but that a settlement has the right principles.

¶10. (C) Charge noted that the Russians do not seem to appreciate the importance of having broad international support in order to make a settlement succeed. President Voronin said that he understands that he needs the support of his international partners, like the U.S. If the unification process were successful, it would be a colossal moment that would require a lot of domestic resources and billions of international support. DAS Merkel said that countries would be more willing to support a lasting settlement, and if a settlement was reached we would do what we could and encourage other countries.

Sixty Day Period to Get off TIP Tier III  
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¶12. (C) DAS Merkel reminded President Voronin that the 60-day action plan period for getting off of TIP Tier III would be coming to an end August 4th. President Voronin said that he was holding a very tough meeting this week to have a serious discussion on the strong measures the government supports on this topic. He said that after the CCTIP (Center for Combating Trafficking in Persons) center had been set up (with American help) most of the other government agencies had washed their hands of the problem. The Ministry of Interior, Border Guards, Customs, Police and other agencies all needed to be involved in solving the trafficking problem, not just CCTIP. Voronin promised that each of these agencies will now take responsibility for fighting trafficking.

¶13. (C) Voronin said that he had personally nominated Valeriu Hincu as the candidate to become the new director of CCTIP. Voronin praised Hincu's skills, saying he comes from an intelligence services background, where he was in charge of counter intelligence. Voronin expressed confidence Hincu will provide good leadership for the CCTIP center and its efforts to combat trafficking.

Voronin Downplaying GUAM because of Transnistria  
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¶14. (C) DAS Merkel said he had attended the GUAM Summit in Batumi July 1st and noted President Voronin's absence. The President explained that this was an extremely difficult question for him. He said that the other members of GUAM, Azerbaijan, Ukraine and Georgia, all suffered currently from bad relations with Russia. He said, with remarkable candor, that it was only because of Transnistria and his need for Russia's support that he could not participate more in GUAM. DAS Merkel suggested that it was not in Moldova's interest to leave Russia with the impression that they had control over what organizations Moldova belonged to and there level of activity. President Voronin assured DAS Merkel that he would not leave GUAM and that he would state publicly his commitment to Moldova's membership in GUAM

IRI / NDI

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¶15. (C) President Voronin, in response to DAS Merkel's support for IRI and NDI's work in Moldova, referenced his meeting with Perina and assured Merkel there was no plan to remove the organizations.

Comment

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¶16. (C) The President, who was relaxed and jovial throughout the meeting, seems to have strengthened his resolve not to be duped into signing any kind of Kozak-II agreement brokered by the Russians. Simultaneously he realizes his need for support from the United States and European Union. Though he acknowledges the importance of Russia, Voronin appeared firm in his commitment that the Transnistrian problem could only be resolved by working within the 5-plus-2 format. End Comment.

¶16. DAS Merkel cleared this cable.

PERINA